



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## DOES HOMER USE THE DEFINITE ARTICLE?<sup>1</sup>

BY JOHN A. SCOTT  
Northwestern University

In our textbooks there frequently appears the statement that the so-called article in Homer is a demonstrative, relative, or personal pronoun, but its use as a true definite article is only apparent.

The most commonly accepted origin of the definite article is that it was originally a demonstrative, but yielded this function, for the most part, to οὗτος, ἐκεῖνος, and ὅδε, and thus weakening into the definite article, passed through a process similar to the Latin *ille* in the Romance languages, *ille homo* becoming French *l'homme*. Without discussing the questions of origin or quoting the vast literature, I wish to state briefly certain reasons for believing that the definite article is freely used in Homer.

The ancient unnamed scholiast as well as such eminently acute judges of Homeric language as Zenodotus and Aristarchus felt that Homer used the true definite article. Scholiast to A 11: τὸν Χρῦσην), διὰ τὴν τάξιν τοῦ ἄρθρου, τὸν ἀρητῆρα Χρῦσην. B 1: ἄλλοι, ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος γράφει ἄλλοι. B 278: ἀνὰ δ' ὁ πτολίπορθος Ὀδυσσεύς), ὁ μὲν Ἀρίσταρχος μετὰ τοῦ ἄρθρου, τινὲς δὲ χωρὶς κακῶς.

These three quotations, selected from many, are sufficient to show that the great Alexandrians had no hesitation in assigning the definite article to Homer. However, they are authorities of weight only when they had access to knowledge now lost, but in this particular case the poems themselves were their only evidence, so that we can examine this evidence for ourselves. I shall apply to Homer the uses of the definite article most common in later Greek.

1. *The article with the demonstrative.*—Each of the demonstrative pronouns is used with the article in Homer: σ 114: τοῦτον τὸν

<sup>1</sup> A full and detailed discussion of this subject is given by Hugo Koch, *De Articulo Homérico* (Leipzig, 1872); Adam Stummer, *Ueber den Artikel bei Homer* (Muennerstadt, 1886). All examples of the definite article in Homer are published by F. Melian Stawell, *Homer and the "Iliad,"* pp. 276 ff., London, 1909.

ἀναλτον. τ 372: αἱ κύνες αἶδε. β 351: κείνον διομένη τὸν κάμμορον. It seems impossible that the article could in these examples have retained its demonstrative force, and yet be used in combination with true demonstrative pronouns.

2. *The article with an intensive pronoun.*—E 396: οὗτος ἀνὴρ. Z 391: τὴν αὐτὴν ὁδόν. η 55: τοκῆων τῶν αὐτῶν. η 326: ἡματι τῷ αὐτῷ. π 334: τῆς αὐτῆς ἀγγελίης.

3. *The article as a simple possessive.*—It is often difficult to decide whether or not the article is a true possessive, but these examples seem reasonably certain. The shade of Patroclus says to Achilles, "Reach me thy hand," Ψ 75: καί μοι δὸς τὴν χεῖρα. λ 492: ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τοῦ παιδὸς ἄγανού μῦθον ἐνίσπες. These are the words with which the departed Achilles begs Odysseus to tell him of his son, "But tell me of my goodly son." I find in Homer fourteen fairly sure examples of the definite article as a possessive.

4. *The article with a possessive.*—There are about fifty examples of this. The following cover practically every case occurring in Attic, as well as some not so occurring: Θ 360: πατὴρ οὐμός. X 280: τὸν ἐμὸν μόρον. Z 407: τὸ σὸν μένος. Z 490: τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα. M 280: τὰ ἅ κῆλα. Ψ 295: τὸν ἐόν τε Πόδαργον. B 136: αἱ δέ που ἡμέτεραι τ' ἄλοχοι. δ 694: ὁ μὲν ὑμέτερος θυμός.

5. *With the participle.*—Φ 262: τὸν ἄγοντα. Ψ 325: τὸν προύχοντα. Ψ 656: τῷ νικήσαντι. There are eleven examples of the article with the participle, all in the *Iliad*.

6. *Referring to something as already mentioned or well known*, the true definite article. There are in this division, exclusive of proper names, about one hundred examples of the definite article. The dead body of Patroclus is referred to repeatedly in P as τὸν νέκρον, the proffered gifts of Agamemnon are τὰ δῶρα, the mound erected in honor of Patroclus is τὸ σῆμα, and the bird at which the archers shot is ἡ ὄρνις. I find about forty-five different words so used in Homer.

7. *The article with proper names.*—Of this there are about fifty examples, some of which are: B 278: ὁ πτολίπορθος Ὀδυσσεύς. B 595: Θάμυριν τὸν Θρήϊκα. Z 201: πεδίον τὸ Ἀλφειον. Λ 660: ὁ Τυδείδης κρατερὸς Διομήδης. Ξ 213: Ζηνὸς τοῦ ἀρίστου. Π 358: Αἴας ὁ μέγας. This last phrase is echoed in Sophocles, *Philoctetes*

411: Αἴας ὁ μείζων, where the definite article is not to be questioned. The scholiast to the passage in Homer clearly recognized the definite article, for he says, Αἴας ὁ μέγας; ἡ διπλῇ, ὅτι συγκριτικῶς λέγεται πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον Αἴαντα ὁ μέγας, ὁ Τελαμώνιος, ἐπεὶ ἐκείνος μείων. In the earlier Ameis-Hentze editions attempts were made to explain away the evident use of the definite article in this passage, but in the last edition the use of the definite article is admitted, “ὁ μέγας, nur hier mit Artikel, um ihn von dem 330 genannten Aias bestimmt zu unterscheiden.” I may say that the late editions of this work completely reverse the position maintained by Ameis that the apparent definite article in Homer is really a demonstrative.

8. *The generic article*.—This use seems beyond question in ρ 218: ὥς αἰεὶ τὸν ὁμοῖον ἄγει θεὸς ὥς τὸν ὁμοῖον. Π 53: ὅππότε δὴ τὸν ὁμοῖον ἀνὴρ ἐθέλησιν ἀμέρσαι—. Ι 320: ὁ τ' ἄεργος ἀνὴρ. Ν 278: ὃ τε δειλὸς ἀνὴρ. Ν 284: τοῦ δ' ἀγαθοῦ. κτλ.

9. *The article with adverbs*.—The examples of τὸ πρῖν, τὸ πάρος, τὸ πρόσθεν, τὸ παρόιθεν, τὸ πρῶτον, τὰ πρῶτα, τὸ τρίτον, τὸ τέταρτον are many, and in most cases it is impossible to assume for the article the force of a demonstrative. This particular use of the adverb and the article is as fully developed in Homer as it is in the Attic tragedians, as my own investigations have shown me.

How large a part meter played in determining the use or omission of the definite article it is hard to say, but it must have been often the deciding influence; e. g., compare these:

Α 54: ἐννήμαρ μὲν ἀνὰ στρατὸν ὄχρετο κῆλα θεοῖο—τῇ δεκάτῃ κτλ.

ι 82: ἔνθεν δ' ἐννήμαρ φερόμην ὀλοοῖς ἀνέμοισιν

πόντον ἐπ' ἰχθυόεντα· ἀτὰρ δεκάτῃ κτλ.

Π 193: τῆς δὲ τρίτης Πείσανδρος ἀρήιος ἡγεμόνευεν

τῆς δὲ τετάρτης ἦρχε γέρων ἱππηλάτα φοῖνιξ,

πέμπτης δ' Ἀλκιμέδων κτλ.

κ 240: αὐτὰρ νοῦς ἦν ἔμπεδος ὥς τὸ πάρος περ.

κ 395: ἄνδρες δ' ἀψ' ἐγένοντο νεώτεροι, ἢ πάρος ᾗσαν.

In view of the evident influence of meter and also the tenacity of epic traditions, it seems certain that the Homeric poems but faintly show the extent of the definite article in the age in which these poems

were produced, and yet despite meter and tradition there are over seven hundred reasonably certain examples of the definite article in Homer.

## CONCLUSION

When we have such cogent examples as τοῦτον τὸν ἀναλτον (σ 114); πεδίου τὸ Ἀλήιον (Ζ 201); τὸν ἄγοντα (Φ 262); τὸν ὁμοῖον (ρ 218); τὸ πρίν (*saepe*), ἰχθύσι τοῖς ὀλίγοις (μ 251); τὸ μέλαν δρυός (ξ 12); τὴν αὐτὴν ὁδόν (Ζ 391), κτλ., we are justified in believing that before the composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* ὁ had fully developed the functions of the definite article.